

McMinnville Affordable Housing Task Force

Minutes from the Jun8th Meeting, Community Development Center

Attendees:

Remy Drabkin (City Councilor)

Sheryl Hill (Business Representative)

Elise Hui (Executive Director, Housing Authority of Yamhill County)

Martha Meeker (City Manager)

Kellie Menke (City Councilor)

Doug Montgomery (City Planning Director)

Darrick Price (Executive Director, Community Home Builders)

Jeff Sargent (Executive Director Yamhill County Action Partnership – YCAP)

Absent due to scheduling conflicts: Jon Johnson (VP, Commercial Loans at Citizens Bank) and Alan Ruden (Councilor)

Guests: Rob Justus, Home First

Rob Justus is the founder of Home First Development and has been working in the homeless services business for 25 years. His most recent project was in the Portland Metro area using a formula based on private financing which averaged \$75,000 per unit versus the City of Portland's cap of \$250,000 per unit. A large part of this savings comes from sidestepping public funds and its associated regulatory overhead while also keeping operating costs and profit margins low.

One of Rob's latest initiatives is with churches looking to convert a portion of their properties into below-cost housing. In this model, the church provides the land and the long term property management and in turn, realizes a small profit that is fed back into the church's operations. He's also working with the Housing Authority of Central Oregon on a 53-unit project with the Housing Authority of Central Oregon.

Rob discussed his experience with building developments that have co-located helping services and for the most part he has shied away from these as the majority of his targeted population doesn't require onsite mental health or addiction treatment. This cuts the overhead and the number of agencies generally involved in his projects and ensures the money stays with providing housing and not office space.

The group discussed whether previous projects Rob had worked with required zoning changes and he mentioned that so far his partners have brought land to table that was already zoned appropriately. As for identifying individuals in need, Rob has been working with local school districts to identify candidate individuals; however, he can only do this since he doesn't take federal dollars. Finally, it was discussed that broadening to include workforce housing can be beneficial to enhance participation by the business community.

The group discussed how to gain traction on doing something locally and the consensus was the first thing was to identify a group of properties zoned for multi-family (preferably

2-3 acres based on 15 units per acre) that have potential. Rob added that the State's Local Innovation and Fast Track (LIFT) Housing Program was having difficulty finding projects for the \$40 million Oregon provided in 2015 for affordable housing as some housing agencies are boycotting the funds as they don't believe the State has provided enough money. He ended his presentation with an offer of a tour of one of his projects if the group desired.

In addition to working with churches, the group discussed working with the School District as well. Overall, there was consensus to continue the dialog with various groups such as local businesses, service groups and others to gauge the larger interest, not only for housing for the homeless but workforce housing as well. It was also discussed that the group will need to eventually pull together a plan that paints an asset picture with operational costs and a long term property management plan to effectively market the idea to businesses. Current examples such as vineyards and wineries who provide housing as part of their compensation plan for temporary labor was mentioned as tangible evidence showing this is a business concern.

At the next meeting, the group will begin to review a preliminary list of potential properties and discuss feedback gained from various agencies. The group will also begin to set language memorializing SDC and building permit fee exemptions while Elise and Jeff mentioned they would begin to look at cottages and tiny home zoning language. Finally, the group discussed a need for an engagement plan to ensure community buy in versus push back.